(c) what is the present demand of pig iron in Gujarat as against the quantity of pig iron being supplied during 1987-88 uptil now, in what manner how it is proposed to meet the gap; and

(d) what is the number of units closed in Gujarat on account of shortage of pig iron and of those which are likely to be affected by this shortage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STEEL IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Representations have come from the industry to provide more pig iron. Gujarat Small Industries Corporation projected a demand for 4 lakh tonnes of pig iron during 1987-88. Based on indigenous availability, 1,37,000 tonnes have been allocated to GSIC during 1987-88 by the Development Commissioner for Iron and Steel. During April, 1987-January 1988 about 81,130 tonnes of pig iron have been supplied by SAIL to GSIC. To supplement the indigenous supplies, GSIC has already made arrangements to import 22,000 tones of pig iron during the current year.

(d) No specific information is available.

Progress of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant

520. SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the progress made so far regarding the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant in Andhra Pradesh and by when the first stage of the plant is expected to be commissioned;

(b) whether Central Government would extend sufficient financial aid to State Government for making arrangements for water supply to the plant; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STEEL IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): (a) The progress in major areas of construction of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant upto the end of January, 1988 was as under:—

	Item of Work	Percentage fulfilment of the cumulative schedule of work
1	Concreting	100.0
2	Structural fabrication	95.3
3	Structural erection	93.0
4	Equipment ordering	103.1
5	Equipment erection	75.0
6	Refractory ordering	99.7
7	Refractory erection	85.3

The first stage of the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant is likely to be ready for commissioning by December, 1988.

(b) and (c) The Central Government has already agreed to advance a loan of Rs. 70 crores to the Andhra Pradesh Government in connection with the implementation of Yeleru Water Supply Project which would meet the water requirements of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant. Out of this amount, a sum of Rs. 39 crores so far requested for by the State Government has been released.

Spurious Fertilizers in Punjab

521. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item under the caption 'Fake fertilizers flood Punjab market' which appeared in the 'Indian Express' of the 10th December, 1987;

(b) whether Government have taken any action against those who are manufacturing and selling the spurious fertilizers in the market;

(c) whether there is any laboratory functioning in the country to check quality of such fertilizers; and

(d) if so, what steps Government have taken to provide only good quality of fertilizers to the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The State Agriculture Department of Punjab have registered cases with the Police against the defaulting dealers, suppliers and also against the manufacturers of spurious DAP

(c) and (d) There are 44 fertiliser quality control laboratories in the country. including the Central Fertiliser Quality Control and Training Institute at Faridabad, with a total analysing capacity of about 80,000 samples per annum to test the quality of fertilisers.

The quality of fertilisers is regulated under the Fertiliser (Control) Order, 1985. The standard specifications of various fertilisers have been laid down under this Order. The State Governments are the enforcement authorities and are vested with adequate powers to ensure that farmers are supplied standard quality of fertilisers.

Settting up of Fertilizer Plant in Northern Region

522. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a study group on new fertilizer plants had recently suggested setting up of 5 plants in the Northern Region;

(b) if so, whether Government have since taken any action thereon;

(c) the locations suggested for above fertilizer plants; and

(d) by when the suggestions of the study group are likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FERTILISERS IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. PRABHU): (a) Yes, Sir. The Study Group has suggested establishment of 4-5 nitrogenous fertilizer plants during the 8th Plan in the Northern Region;

(b) The report of the Study Group has been released to the Press and comments/views have also been invited from the State Governments and Fertilizer Association of India;

(c) No specific location for the 4-5 new plants have been suggested by the Study Group; and

(d) On receipt of the suggestions/comments from the State Governments and Fertilizer Association of India, a decision will be taken by the Government.